

The Backwards Bike

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFzDaBzBIL0>

What Is Critical Thinking?

The art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improve it.

An effective critical thinker:

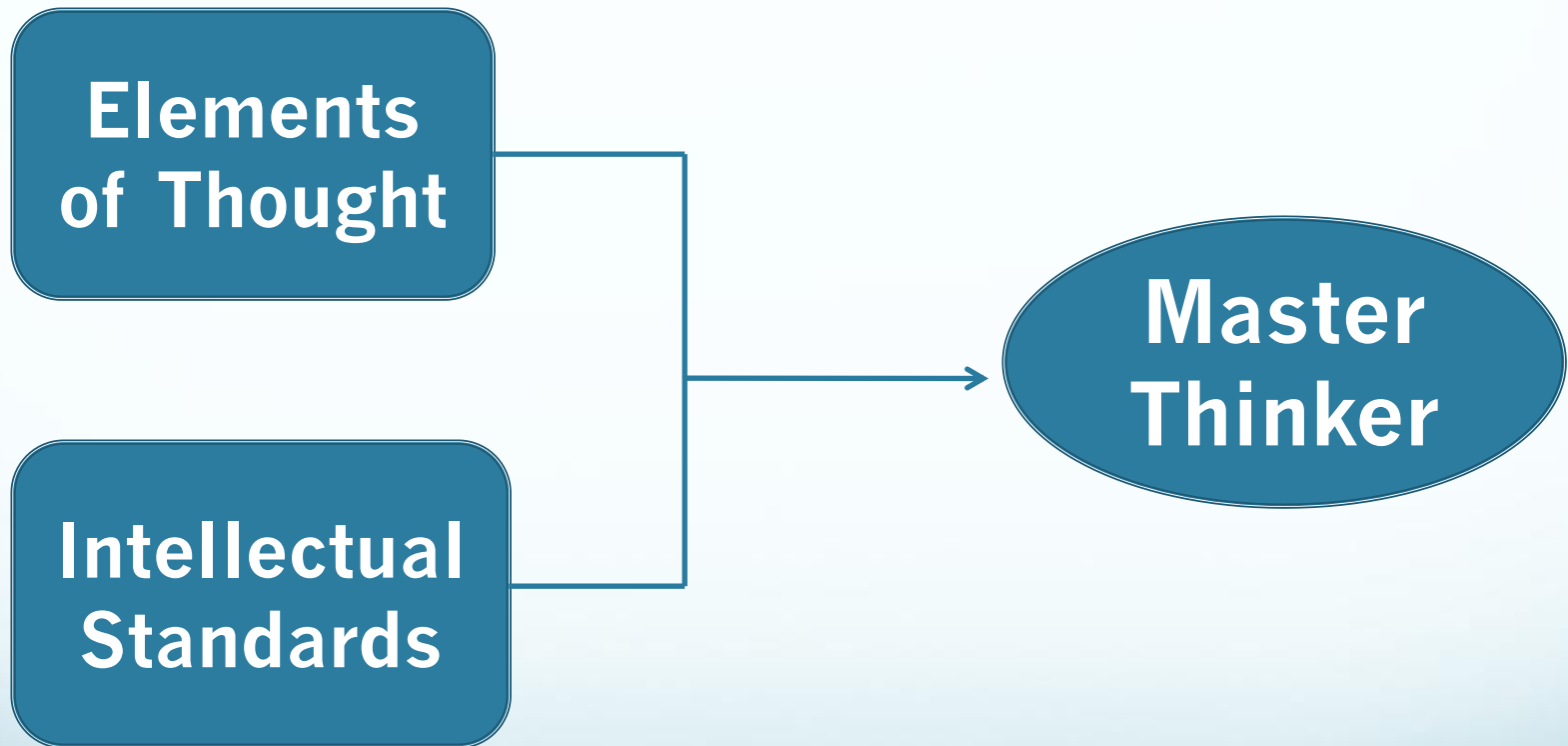
- ✓ Raises vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely
- ✓ Gathers and assesses relevant information
- ✓ Comes to conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards
- ✓ Thinks, assessing assumptions, consequences, and
- ✓ Communicates effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems

Why Critical Thinking?

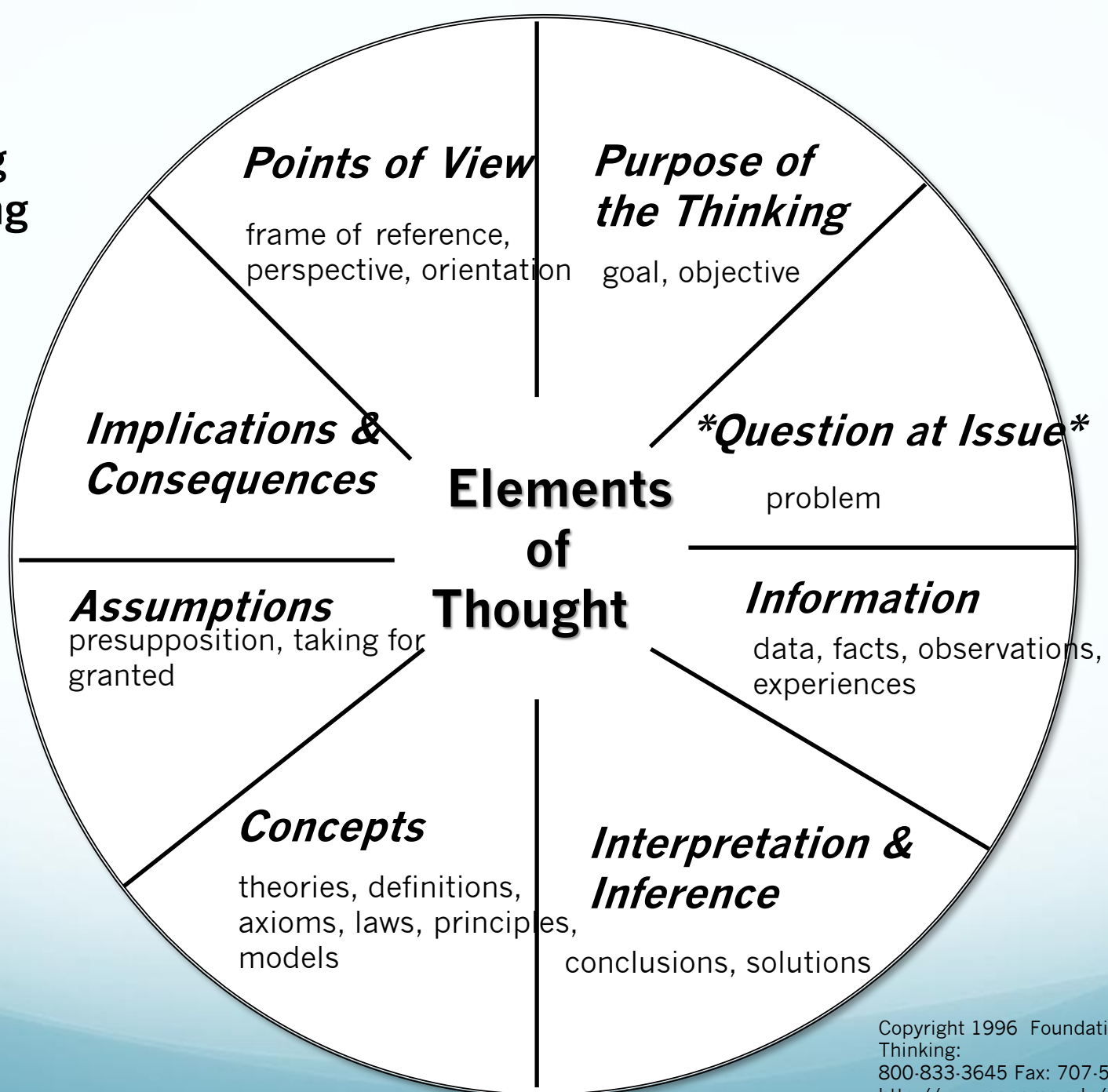
Critical thinking is purposeful and reflective judgment about what to believe or what to do in response to observations, experience, verbal or written expressions, or arguments.

Developing Critical Thinking

The Paul + Elder Model



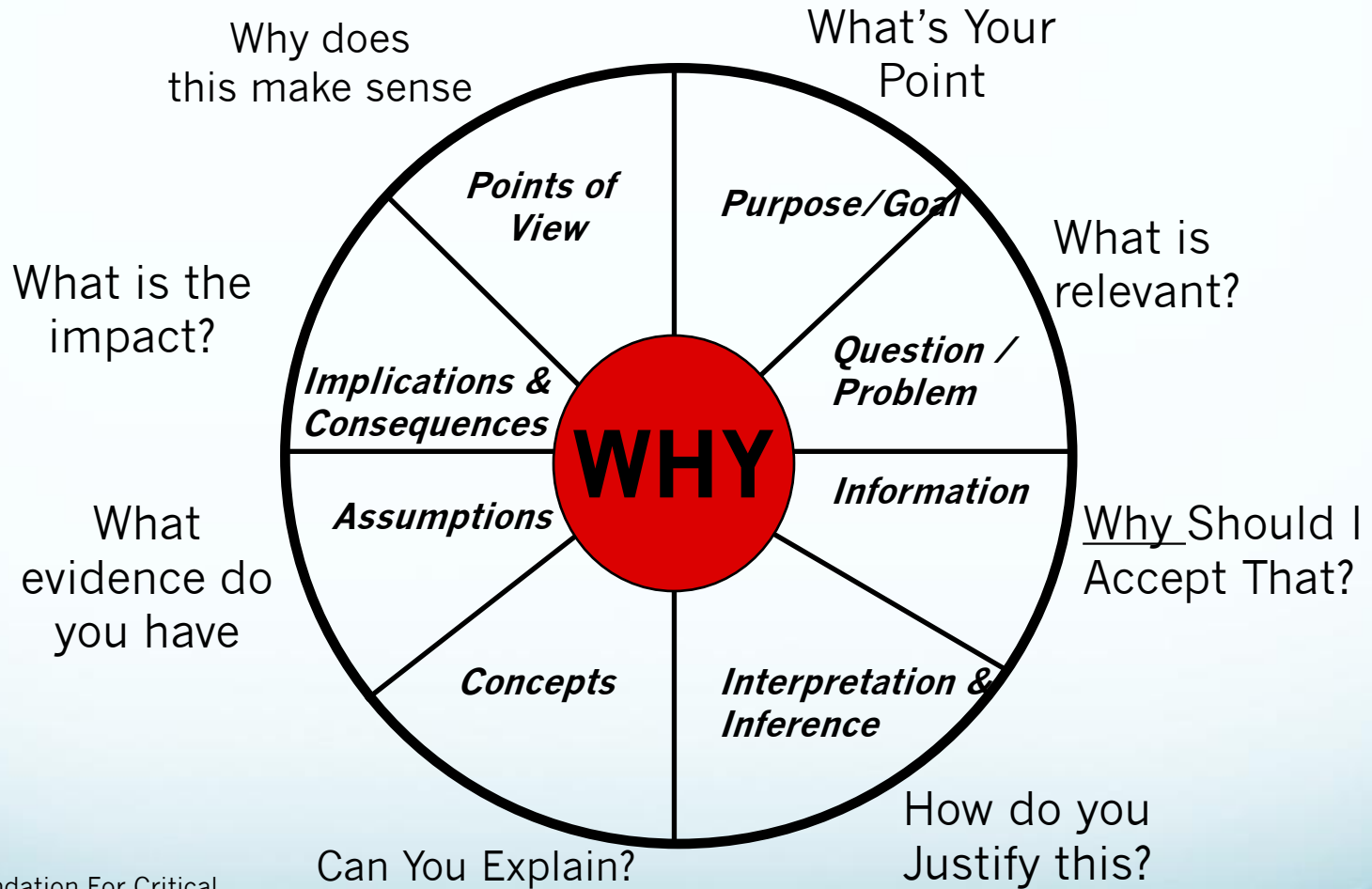
Taking Thinking Apart



Useful Questions

- ✓ "What's your purpose?"
- ✓ "What is important?" "WHY"
- ✓ "What information is needed?" "WHY"
- ✓ "Can you explain this?"
- ✓ "What am I taking for granted?"
- ✓ "What am I implying?" "WHY"
- ✓ "What is my point of view?" "WHY"

Target Areas



Universal Intellectual Standards

**Testing the
quality of your
thinking**



Clarity

Could you elaborate further?
Could you give me an example?
Could you illustrate what you mean?

Accuracy

How could we check on that?
How could we find out if that is true?
How could we verify or test that?

Precision

Could you be more specific?
Could you give me more details?
Could you be more exact?

Relevance

How does that relate to the problem?
How does that bear on the question?
How does that help us with the issue?

Depth

What factors make this a difficult problem?
What are some of the complexities of this question?
What are some of the difficulties we need to deal with?

Breadth

Do we need to look at this from another perspective?
Do we need to consider another point of view?
Do we need to look at this in other ways?

Logic

Does all this make sense together?
Does your first paragraph fit in with your last?
Does what you say follow from the evidence?

Significance

Is this the most important problem to consider?
Is this the central idea to focus on?
Which of these facts are most important?

Fairness

Do I have any vested interest in this issue?
Am I sympathetically representing the viewpoints of others?

Critical Thinking & Communication

- ✓ What is communication?
- ✓ Why do we communicate?
- ✓ How do we apply critical thinking in conversation?
- ✓ How do we apply critical thinking to presentations?

So . . .

- ✓ Critical Thinking is central to your competence, regardless of your job or position
- ✓ You must PRACTICE critical thinking skills—they don't happen by accident
- ✓ If not now, when? If not here, where? If not you, who?

Make better decisions

